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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/439,310	11/12/1999	RUSSELL FREDERICK GLOOR	EN999079	1499

7590 03/22/2004

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EXAMINER

REAGAN, JAMES A

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3621

DATE MAILED: 03/22/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/439,310

Applicant(s)

GLOOR ET AL.

Examiner

James A. Reagan

Art Unit

3621

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 25 November 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 2 and 4 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 2, and 4 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date: _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date: _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Status of Claims

1. This action is in response to the Decision On Appeal filed on 25 November 2003 (paper #19).
2. Claims 1, 2, and 4 have been examined.
3. As per the request by the Board of Patent Appeals and Inferences in the response received on November 25, 2003 (Appeal No. 2003-439,310) the application has been remanded to the Examiner to resolve the inconsistency between the rejection of claim 4 under 35 U.S.C. § 101 and the lack of the same rejection with regard to claim number one and claim number 2. Therefore, the following rejection is set forth below:

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

4. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requires of this title.
5. Claims 1, 2, and 4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to nonstatutory subject matter. The basis of this rejection is set forth in a two-prong test of:
 - (1) whether the invention is within the technological arts; and
 - (2) whether the invention produces a useful, concrete, and tangible result.

For a claimed invention to be statutory, the claimed invention must be within the technological arts. Mere ideas in the abstract (i.e., abstract idea, law of nature, natural phenomena) that do not apply, involve, use, or advance the technological arts fail to promote the "progress of science and the useful arts" (i.e., the physical sciences as opposed to social sciences, for example) and therefore are found to be non-statutory subject matter. For a process claim to pass muster, the recited process must somehow apply, involve, use, or advance the technological arts. See *In re Musgrave*¹ as well as *AT&T v. Excel Communications Inc.*² and *State Street Bank & Trust Co. v. Signature Financial Group, Inc.*³

In the present case, the recited steps of merely *defining a first solution, performing a first assurance review, performing a second assurance review, defining a second solution, performing a first or readiness review, periodically performing a project management review, performing a deliverable readiness review, performing a third assurance Review and conducting a meeting*, does not apply, involve, use, or advance the technological arts since all of the recited steps can be

¹ All that is necessary to make a sequence of operational steps a statutory process within 35 U.S.C. 101 is that it be in the technological arts so as to be in consonance with the Constitutional purpose to promote the progress of "useful arts." *In re Musgrave*, 431 F.2d 882, 167 USPQ 280 (CCPA 1970).

² A claim is limited to a practical application when the method, as claimed, produces a concrete, tangible and useful result: i.e. the method recites a step or act of producing something that is concrete, tangible and useful. See *AT&T v. Excel Communications Inc.*, 172 F.3d at 1358, 50 USPQ2d at 1452.

performed without the use of any technological apparatus, system or method such as, for example, a computer system, database, electronic circuit, or software application. These steps only constitute a method that is easily attainable without the use of any state-of-the-art devices or techniques.

Additionally, for a claimed invention to be statutory, the claimed invention must produce a useful, concrete, and tangible result. *["Usefulness" may be evidenced by, but not limited to, a specific utility of the claimed invention. "Concreteness" may be evidenced by, but not limited to, repeatability and/or implementation without undue experimentation. "Tangibility" may be evidenced by, but not limited to, a real or actual effect.]*

In the present case, independent claims 1 and 2 and dependent claim 4 cites limitations regarding a readiness reviews and conducting a meeting. Although the claimed subject may at times produce a useful and tangible result, it does not produce a concrete result. That is, the subject matter contained within the claims merely relates an intention to produce result i.e. tangible written reports or to verify the existence of said reports, but the results are not concrete because the outcome of the meeting is not predictable or repeatable. That is, the results of each meeting would most likely change from meeting to meeting. As affirmed above, the

³ A machine claim is statutory when the machine, as claimed, produces a concrete, tangible and useful result. See *State Street Bank & Trust Co. v. Signature Financial Group, Inc.*, 149 F.3d at

subject matter contained within the claims merely relates a thought process and not a physical device such as a computer or computer software that would produce or organize such written reports or establish whether the reports exist at all. Consequently, the claim language as written does not meet the requirements for statutory subject matter.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to **James A. Reagan** whose telephone number is **(703) 306-9131**. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 9:30am-5:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, **James Trammell** can be reached at (703) 305-9768.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the **Receptionist** whose telephone number is **(703) 305-3900**.

Any response to this action should be mailed to:

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

Washington, D.C. 20231


or faxed to:

(703) 305-7687 [Official communications; including
After Final communications labeled "Box AF"]

(703) 308-1396 [Informal/Draft communications, labeled
"PROPOSED" or "DRAFT"]

Hand delivered responses should be brought to Crystal Park 5,
2451 Crystal Drive, Arlington, VA, 7th floor receptionist.

JAR
06 March 2004


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